

JULY 1950

# MONTHLY REVIEW

AN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST MAGAZINE

## REVIEW OF THE MONTH

VOL. 2

**WHY I AM A MARXIST** HAROLD J. LASKI

**AN APPEAL—AND A  
RECOMMENDATION** ROBERT SHILLAKER

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## COOPERATION ON THE LEFT

HISTORICUS

FREDERICK BOYDEN

SCOTT NEARING

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C. A. GREEN

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**NOTES FROM THE EDITORS**

June was a big month for the jailing of dissenters in the "land of the free and the home of the brave." Marxist theory teaches us to expect that a state that is really threatened will try to suppress its enemies. But what are we to think of a state that never ceases to boast about its power and solidity and at the same time throws people into jail for nothing more dangerous than "wrong" ideas? It begins to look as though the desperate situation of capitalism in the rest of the world is causing the American ruling class to lose its nerve.

We have a confession to make. We are getting to dislike some of our readers: the procrastinators, the laggards, the drones, the sluggards, the do-it-tomor-

*(continued on inside back cover)*

## NEW TURN IN AMERICAN POLITICS?

A correspondent who is in a particularly good position to observe developments both at home and abroad writes us as follows:

In recent months certain changes have occurred in the right wing of the Republican Party which may be of crucial importance for future trends in American politics. Until recently the diehards, who can be typified by Senator Taft and his associates, occupied a peculiar position on the political scene. Their economic philosophy was so old-fashioned and orthodox that it frequently conflicted with the policies and requirements of American imperialism. They were against heavy government spending on armaments and the Marshall Plan; they opposed financial assistance to Great Britain because they hate even the mildest form of "socialism" almost as intensely as they hate Communism.

With the right-wing Republicans holding off, the cold war has been waged by a coalition of the Truman administration and what may be called the Dulles-Vandenberg group of Republicans. The division between the Taft forces and the Dulles-Vandenberg group reflected a serious split in the American capitalist class—a split which, at least up to a point, has weakened the impetus of the cold war and allowed the leadership of the CIO and the AFL to claim an important place as junior partner in the "cold war front."

It looks now as though the victory of the Chinese Communists has changed the situation fundamentally. The shock has transformed the Taftites from laggards and malcontents into the vanguard of the cold war forces. It was this group that started the agitation for American participation in the defense of Formosa; it was this group, too, that provided indispensable sponsorship for the whole McCarthy affair. Herbert Hoover's "plan" to oust the USSR, Poland, and Czechoslovakia from the UN and his demand for non-recognition of the new China are part and parcel of the same attitude.

What will be the repercussions of this change in outlook on the part of the right-wing Republicans? And how can the new attitude toward the cold war be reconciled with their economic orthodoxy?

It is, of course, too early to be sure, but it seems quite possible that the upshot will be a new coalition including the Taftites, the Dulles-Vandenberg forces, and the right-wing Democrats. The Taftites would give up their opposition to large-scale spend-

ing on armaments and even on foreign aid—but at a price. In foreign policy they would demand a speeding up of German rearmament, greater pressure on Britain, the inclusion of Spain in the Atlantic Pact, the non-recognition of Communist China, and more active military intervention in Southeast Asia. In domestic affairs they would demand policies directed primarily at the trade unions: for example, stricter enforcement of the Taft-Hartley Law.

If such a compromise were arrived at it would completely change the character of the cold-war coalition. The trade union leadership would lose the privileges of a junior partner. "Fair Dealers" would be ousted from the Administration, and it would not be long before the "red hunt" would be extended to include union leaders, ADAers and all the others who comprise what may be called the left wing of the present cold war coalition. The loyalty certificates which have been earned by joining in on the red baiting up to now would be of no avail then. "As thou betrayeth so thou will be betrayed."

To be sure this is only one possible outcome. But it seems to be sufficiently important to bear close examination by the people concerned. And they are many.

The situation described by our correspondent—accurately, we think—puts the Truman Administration in a quandary. To maintain its position of leadership it must frustrate the formation of the new rightist cold-war coalition and at the same time hold onto the popular support which put it in power in 1948. Recent events have shown how it is trying to perform this difficult feat of carrying water on both shoulders. On the one hand, acting primarily through Acheson, it has been busily appeasing all but the extreme fascist wing of the Republicans in the field of foreign affairs; on the other hand, acting primarily through Truman himself, it has been trying to reassure the country that its primary concerns are peace and the people's welfare.

Will these related maneuvers work? Will they be able to keep the new cold-war coalition from jelling and then to bring about a Fair Deal victory at the polls in November? If so, Truman and company will remain in the driver's seat and the present cold-war coalition will hold together, probably at least until the 1954 elections. But if these maneuvers fail, then events will probably follow the course sketched by our correspondent.

At present, the prospects of the Truman forces do not appear very bright. The defeat of Pepper by a reactionary Democrat in the Florida primaries was a severe blow to the Fair Dealers—especially to the trade union leaders who worked hard for Pepper's re-election. And recent reports indicate a good deal of apathy on the part of the

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rank and file. Says a Washington dispatch to the *New York Times* of June 5th:

Union labor's political program is bogged in apathy and the top leadership is disturbed.

The apathy is reflected chiefly in financial ledgers. Contributions from individual members are far below hopes and expectations.

American Federation of Labor unions were reported to have collected about \$250,000 from members so far this year for Labor's League for Political Education. That averages about three cents a member. Minimum contributions of \$2 are sought.

Collections of the Congress of Industrial Organizations' Political Action Committee could not be learned but they are known to be unsatisfactory. . . .

Of course, all this may be changed by fall. But then again, maybe it won't.

At any rate, one thing is reasonably certain. The Right cannot be appeased into capitulation. If the Truman forces lose their popular backing their jig will be up.

### APRES MOI LE DELUGE!

MR readers will be interested to know the reaction of European Left socialists to recent international developments, including the May diplomatic conferences which were held in London and the Schuman plan for putting the heavy industries of France and Germany under a common authority. We therefore quote at some length from an editorial in the latest issue of *Cahiers Internationaux* (No. 16). We do so the more willingly since the editors of CI have expressed our own thoughts with an eloquence which we could hardly hope to match:

The conference season is in full swing in the part of the world which still remains capitalist. When Mr. Truman decided to give the green light to work on the H-bomb, there arose a great wave of opinion favoring an effort at international conciliation. The diplomatic conferences which were then announced appeared to promise a search for an understanding. But nothing of the sort has happened. The leaders in Washington persist in traveling their dangerous path. The agenda of the conferences—of the Three as well as of the Twelve—are dominated by the sole aim of intensifying the cold war and of reinforcing the military preparations of every one concerned. . . .

The offensive is being conducted against the countries of the East on every level. Dulles, Acheson, and Truman hastened,

at the very moment of Trygve Lie's departure for Europe, to announce a redoubling of anti-Soviet, anti-Communist propaganda and renewed activity inside the eastern countries. At the same time military credits are being heaped up, preparations on a world-wide scale are being hastened. . . .

The real struggle, however, is on the economic plane.

If world capitalism felt itself able to look out for the welfare of the masses it would not worry about their wanting a change. If capitalism were sure that it is more efficient than the socialist system, it would not fear that time will strengthen the countries which are already socialist or are on the road to socialism. It would be as confident of the future as the leaders of these countries obviously are.

To reply to economic competition by accumulating guns and military bases is not to reply at all. It might be a temporary device to absorb the output of the factories. But it is also a way of preparing for a brutal interruption of the game, in the manner of a bad gambler who, seeing that he has lost, prefers to knock the banker out with a blow of the fist.

The reason is that the capitalists feel unsafe on the field of peaceful competition.

The difficulties which Mr. Truman periodically denies are there, and they are not going to be removed by mere talk. In the USA itself, strikes take place. Official figures show five million unemployed. Agricultural surpluses are piling up, and there is an ever-present fear that markets will collapse. The Marshall Plan and rearmament have succeeded only to the extent that they have kept things from getting worse. They are only expedients.

The future is equally somber in America's satellites. The Marshall Plan competes with and upsets local production. The share of wages in the national income has fallen and with it the purchasing power of the workers. The result is poverty, unemployment, mounting social tension. The political regimes of these countries are being discredited: bourgeois parliamentarism no longer inspires the confidence of the masses and every day tolerates new violations of its own principles. Measures of repression are followed by exceptional laws. As in the period between the two world wars, the trend is toward authoritarian formulas. Neo-fascism is beginning to show its face.

Discredit extends to capitalism itself and is only exaggerated by the measures which are taken to defend the system. Many of capitalism's own adherents will admit, in private, that they believe the future belongs to collectivism. An end-of-the-regime mentality pervades the ruling classes, a disillusioned pessimism to which art and literature bear witness. "Après moi le déluge!" said one of the last kings of France before the Revolution of

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1789. How many cabinet ministers and businessmen have the same ideal today!

Can they believe that atom bombs can arrest the development of history?

The latest project of M. Schuman fits into the general plan of war preparations. It would place French industry under the tutelage of the German coal and steel magnates—and it would create the conditions for German rearment. With what indignation would a Jaurès have condemned this project! With what faith he would have appealed to the French and German working classes to reject it! But the leaders of the French Socialist Party have just declared that the initiative of the French Government "puts the Franco-German problem on a new and constructive plane and, by arousing great hopes, changes the whole atmosphere between the two countries." Once more, by their acts, the socialists of the Right have confirmed the judgment which we have so often passed upon them.

But they reckon without the people. Without the people, who remain faithful to the working-class tradition of struggle against the "merchants of death." To participate in this struggle we have dedicated ourselves to disseminating the truth.

## MORE ON POINT FOUR VS. SOCIAL REVOLUTION

In the last month's Review of the Month we discussed "Point Four vs. Social Revolution" with particular reference to the extremely rapid and well-balanced development of Soviet Central Asia in the decade 1928-1937. Let us pursue the issue—which every one will agree is one of the most important before the world today—somewhat further. What happened in Soviet Central Asia after 1937? Why don't other countries which control backward areas use the methods which have proved so successful in the USSR?

Valuable light is thrown on both these questions by a discussion which was held in London in May 1945—at a time when it was still possible to talk calmly and sensibly about the Soviet Union without being labelled a traitor, or a subversive, or a spy (or all three). The discussion took place at a joint meeting of the Royal Empire Society and the Royal African Society (two very, very respectable organizations) and was reported in the journal of the former, *United Empire*, for September-October 1945. The chairman was Lord Hailey, G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., Britain's leading authority on colonial administration; and the main speaker was Colonel C. E. Ponsonby, T.D., D.L., at that time a Conservative Member of Parliament holding the governmental post of Parliamentary Private Secretary to Anthony Eden,

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Minister of Foreign Affairs in the wartime coalition government. The other speakers were presumably all members of one or the other of the sponsoring organizations.

It is worthwhile to quote at considerable length from Colonel Ponsonby's opening speech:

I was fortunate enough last winter to visit Russia. Perhaps you will forgive me if, for a few moments, I tell you what I found in the Central Asian Republics; partly because it has been suggested that I should do so, and partly because I think it is the duty of any of us who have the opportunity to visit territories other than our own, to see whether there are in them any methods of government or development which, if adopted, might be for the benefit of our own colonial Empire. Naturally, when I was investigating conditions in these Republics I had always before me the part of Africa with which I was familiar, namely East and Central Africa, and I would suggest to members of the audience that both in this connection and in what I say afterwards, they should apply comparisons and considerations to their particular part of the Colonial Empire which they know best.

In Russia I visited the Republics in Central Asia of Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, but I will take Uzbekistan as an example. Twenty-one years ago the Emir of Uzbekistan (who held his territory under the Czar), in fear of the reprisals by his poor people, who existed only for the purpose of taxation, with twenty of his chief followers galloped away to Afghanistan, where he subsequently died. Today one of his sons is in a technical institute and another a teacher in Moscow. Twenty-one years ago the literacy (capacity to read and write) in Uzbekistan was 7 percent, practically the only teaching being in the Mohammedan schools, and very few women could write at all. There were one or two small irrigation schemes on the Czar's estates—there were no factories and no hydro-electric plants. What is the situation after twenty-one years? Now 98 percent of the population can read and write; there are 4000 schools, two universities and several technical institutes; there are large efficient factories; huge irrigation schemes; 20 hydro-electric plants, and, amongst other things, a wonderful ballet and opera, including in its repertoire *Othello* and *Desdemona*.

This is certainly not a complete answer to the question of what happened in Soviet Central Asia after 1937, but it gives a sufficiently clear idea of the general direction of developments. We may recall, for example, that the literacy figure for 1937 was 70 percent. By 1944, according to Colonel Ponsonby, it had risen to 98 percent. There is no reason to suppose that relative progress in other lines was less impressive.

Colonel Ponsonby went on to ask questions and make comparisons:

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How has this transformation come about? How have these leisure-loving Asiatic people been galvanized into activity; become teachers, engineers, technicians, and above all become, in the first place, enthusiastic for their Republic of Uzbekistan, and in the second place, ardent adherents of the USSR. I think the answer is that firstly they have found security; secondly they realize the advantage of attachment to a regime that has brought them material prosperity, not so very great, but undreamed of twenty-one years ago; a regime which they can rely on to supply advice or expert personnel on technical subjects, and also finance for big schemes which they cannot afford themselves.

But Moscow has shown great wisdom. It has emphasized that this Republic can leave the USSR if it so desires; that these people are Uzbeks first and Russians second, and that they are responsible for their own development; but by means of government-controlled radio and press; by control of cropping and of production in factories, Uzbekistan is welded into the machine as an integral part of the main USSR.

When I visited these Central Asian States and saw all this progress I was bound to make comparisons: I was bound to ask myself how all this advancement compared with an advancement in the Colonial Empire. . . . And as I am speaking as a member of the Royal African Society and know most about East Africa, let me look at the problem from the point of view of East Africa. Could we have been more progressive having regard to the nature and state of civilization of the people? Could we have done what was done in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan? Here is an instance.

In 1924 a boy leading his flocks from one oasis to the next; in 1945 that boy a member of a collective farm (irrigated) and sharing in a bus to go to the principal city to listen to his favorite opera—*Hamlet*. Can you see that happening in East Africa?

Colonel Ponsonby clearly could *not* see all this happening in East Africa, but he was not very convincing when he tried to explain why.

First, he argued that Central Asia had had a long history of civilization reaching back beyond Alexander the Great, while East Africa had not. But what does this explain? There are countries with older civilizations than that of Central Asia which are today just about where they were in 1924—for example, Egypt, Iran, and Iraq.

Second, Colonel Ponsonby pointed out, quite rightly, that a different attitude to work prevails in the USSR as compared to East Africa. In the Soviet Union it is both an honor and a duty to work, and incentives are provided which make it in the self-interest of the individual to be guided by the principle, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work." Colonel Ponsonby would

leave it to the audience to consider whether it would be possible or politic, by coercive and other means, to make the lethargic

African work on these lines in Government factories or on collective farms, remembering also that he has no national spirit and we have no Government-controlled radio or newspapers to impress on him that the work of each individual is for the good of the State.

But would not Colonel Ponsonby, if he had visited Uzbekistan in 1924, have concluded that the "leisure-loving Asiatics" were just as incapable of hard and sustained work as he believed the "lethargic Africans" to be in 1945? And how could he possibly answer the point made by the very first speaker in the discussion, Sir Bernard Bourdillon, who pointed out that *West* Africans are far from lethargic and suggested—very appropriately—that the trouble with *East* Africans was that they had to work for Europeans rather than for themselves?

In the subsequent discussion most of the speakers tried to apply what Colonel Ponsonby had told them about Soviet Central Asia to the British colonies. No one denied the sensational achievements of the Central Asian Republics; no one charged Colonel Ponsonby with being a dupe of Soviet propaganda; no one claimed that the British colonies were faced with essentially different problems. And yet all the speakers clearly had grave doubts as to whether the highly successful Soviet methods could or should be adopted by the British. It is important to understand the form in which the dominant issue presented itself to their minds—as an issue of freedom vs. coercion. This was expressed in its crudest form by a Mr. Jan Koens who

rather regretted so much mention had been made of Russia in this question of African colonies. The Russian regimen was compared with the British. Russia was bureaucratic and people had to do things. The word "must" was used in the lecture; the people of Africa loved freedom above all and that was why they loved the British. Bureaucratic rule would not work in Africa; the people were too independent and free; they would not do away with their local customs or lore.

It is, of course, easy to make fun of a statement like this. The idea that Africans, driven off their land by white settlers and deprived of all political rights except at the purely tribal level (both of which conditions are widely prevalent in East Africa), the idea that such people are "independent and free" and "love the British" for keeping them in that state may seem simply ridiculous. But to regard it in this light would be to miss the essential point. What Mr. Koens really meant by freedom is indicated by the last clause: "they would not do away with their local customs or lore." In other words, freedom consists in maintaining the social and cultural *status quo*—insofar, of course, as it is not altered by the "natural laws" of economics—and in this sense British policy upholds freedom. Soviet policy, on

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the other hand, is aimed at a conscious and far-reaching transformation of "local customs and lore" and hence must be considered the very negation of freedom.

The same way of looking at things underlies the concluding remarks of Lord Hailey. There is, however, this difference, that Lord Hailey, as a relatively enlightened humanitarian, expresses himself *in favor* of encroachments on the "freedom" of the Africans:

THE CHAIRMAN thanked Colonel Ponsonby for a most informative and stimulating address. . . . The fundamental difficulty in all these matters was that on the one side there was the claim of the gradualists, on the other side there was the attractive picture of what could be done in one generation by methods the whole object of which was rapid development. In this there was a contest of principles. Evolution in the traditional method involved the maximum of liberty to the colonial subject. Evolution, particularly economic evolution in the methods adopted in Russia, inevitably meant some degree of regimentation or compulsion. He was convinced that whether we were prepared to go the whole way in rapid development or not, we must do far more to curtail certain liberties of the subject in Africa than we did at present if anything like success was to be achieved. We must protect the African from the results of the wastage of soil, we must adopt greater methods of regimentation or regulation in matters of health, and there was a variety of matters of the same kind in which we must take a far more definite line in regard to the liberty of the subject, otherwise the African himself would suffer.

Lord Hailey, a careful student of colonial problems, was fully aware that all this was easier said than done:

Colonel Ponsonby mentioned various methods for improved planning at headquarters. Had we yet the kind of organization which could be so forward-looking, or be so willing to grasp fundamental problems of this kind? It would demand something far more than a change of mechanism, something far more than a change in our present methods of devolving authority on colonial governments and the like.

But in the end Lord Hailey, too, was stymied by the contradiction which had dominated the whole discussion: "It would demand," he continued, "something far-reaching if we were really to profit by the example of the Soviet Republics to get the best out of the lesson they were able to teach and yet to find the way of achieving those results without departing from the policy of respecting the traditions and customs of the African people. That was the problem which any government of the future would have to tackle."

The problem, in other words, is how to get the benefits of a social revolution while maintaining the *status quo*. Lord Hailey had no suggestions as to how it could be done; he was content to hand it over to a "government of the future." Needless to say, the Labor Government—which was elected two months later—has been just as unsuccessful. The reason is simply that the problem itself is as insoluble as the squaring of the circle. No colonial power has ever solved it and none ever will.

What does all this mean for America and Point Four? Many liberals will argue that the lesson to be learned is that the US must renounce support of the *status quo*, must even *promote* social revolution, if Point Four is to succeed in its aims.

That's fine. But where does it lead? You can promote social revolution only by supporting revolutionaries. But who are the revolutionaries in the backward areas of the world? Why, they are the Communists and the left-wing socialists who look to the USSR for inspiration and example, not because of Moscow gold or ideological hypnotism but simply because the USSR has done the job and done it well—as the experience of Soviet Central Asia *proves*.

Well, then, perhaps the US should support the Communists in order to make Point Four work?

Logically, of course. The only trouble is that the whole purpose of Point Four is to make the world safe from Communism. And as between making Point Four work and trying to make it serve its purpose, is there any doubt about which course the American ruling class will follow?

We shall no doubt return to Point Four in future issues of MR. It is a very important question, and one on which Americans are particularly badly informed. In the meantime, let us sum up as concisely as possible the conclusions we have so far arrived at in our two articles on the subject:

1. The essence of Point Four is the export of private American capital. This will require recipient countries to agree to maintain capitalist economies, not in their own interest but in the interest of American capital. As a matter of historical experience, private capital export has never led to the healthy, balanced development of a backward area, and there is no reason to assume that American capital will succeed where its predecessors have failed.

2. But in reality there is little prospect that private capital will ever again have a clear field for the development of backward areas. The experience of Soviet Central Asia in the decade 1928-37 *proves* that much more rapid and much better balanced progress can be

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achieved through a social revolution leading to thorough-going social and economic reorganization; and backward countries are certain to be increasingly aware of and influenced by this momentous fact.

3. The development of Soviet Central Asia up to 1945 continued the rapid economic and cultural advance of the decade 1928-37.

4. Capitalist colonial powers, of which Britain is of course the outstanding example, have been and are unable to make use of the lessons of Soviet experience for the simple reason that it is not possible to reap the fruits of a social revolution while maintaining the *status quo*.

5. What all this means for America is that to make Point Four work the US would have to support social revolution in the backward areas of the world. But we can be certain that Point Four will not be made to work for the very simple reason that its purpose is precisely to defeat the social revolutionaries.

(June 15, 1950)

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### "FREE ENTERPRISE" DEPARTMENT

*The extent of concentration of economic power in the steel industry in 1947, as shown in the recently published Report of the Federal Trade Commission "The Concentration of Productive Facilities."*

Rank	Company	Percent of net capital assets owned by each corporation	Cumulative percent owned
1.	United States Steel Corp .....	28.6	28.6
2.	Bethlehem Steel Corp .....	13.4	42.0
3.	Republic Steel Corp .....	7.2	49.2
4.	Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp .....	5.3	54.5
5.	National Steel Corp .....	5.3	59.8
6.	Armco Steel Corp .....	3.6	63.4
7.	Inland Steel Co .....	3.0	66.4
8.	Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co.	2.9	69.3

## WHY I AM A MARXIST

BY HAROLD J. LASKI

I have, I suppose, been a socialist in some degree ever since the last years of my schooldays. When I try to think out the sources of a faith that has been the central conviction of my life, I find that the difficulties of sorting them out are immense. Something was due to the influence of a great schoolmaster who made us feel the sickness of an acquisitive society. Something, too, was the outcome of a Jewish upbringing, the sense it conferred of being treated differently from other people and for no obviously assignable cause. I learned a good deal from books, especially from those of Sidney and Beatrice Webb. They made me realize that a whole class of human beings was overlooked in the traditional liberalism of the family to which I belonged. And there stays in my mind a speech I heard in Manchester as a boy on the threshold of a university career from Keir Hardie, whose account of the effort of the Scottish miners to form a trade union made me begin, at least dimly, to understand the price the workers have to pay for the social reform they achieve.

I went up to Oxford with radical views, and my years there confirmed me in them. It was the first experience I had of the intensity of class division in England. It was the first experience I had, also, of the resistance atmosphere can impose upon the admission of new ideas, which are dismissed less because they have been examined than because their premises are outside the environment they seek to penetrate. My debt to Oxford is immeasurable. Contact there with the late Professor Dicey, with Mr. Herbert Fisher and Professor Ernest Barker was, on the purely academic plane, a superb experience. But they were all, if I may so phrase it, aloof from life. Oxford generally, so far as its teachers were concerned, thought about social problems in a way which suggested interest in them but not responsibility for their solution. It told you, as it were, that correct analysis was important. It did not suggest that, when the analysis was made, any obligation emerged to act upon the principles it suggested.

I devoted a good deal of time at Oxford to the Fabian Society and to propaganda in behalf of woman suffrage. These brought me

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*This article, by the eminent British socialist whose untimely death came just a few months ago, first appeared in The Nation of January 14, 1939. It is reprinted by permission of the editor.*

## WHY I AM A MARXIST

into contact with two of the greatest men I have ever known—George Lansbury and H. W. Nevinson. From the first I learned the meaning and importance of equality, and from the second the meaning and importance of liberty. George Lansbury, too, gave me my first job. He was then editing the *Daily Herald*, and when I left Oxford, in the summer of 1914, he asked me to write editorials for his paper. That was a significant experience for me. It brought me into contact with a good deal of what was most radical in the pre-war Socialist movement, and it made me formulate to myself, in a coherent way, some of the lessons I had learned at Oxford. Contact with Lansbury was a great education. He was absolutely straightforward, absolutely democratic, and entirely fearless. He always meant every word he said, and it never occurred to him to say less than he meant. Through him I got my first chance to see the inside of the Socialist movement at first hand, and that at a critical time.

Within six weeks of my going to the *Herald* Great Britain was as war. I sought to enlist on the first day. I did not believe in the war, but I did believe that, on the whole, the victory of Germany would mean more evil than its defeat. I was rejected on physical grounds, mainly a weak heart. That rejection altered the whole course of my life. For I was asked, through the influence of Herbert Fisher, to take a lectureship in history at McGill University to replace an Oxford don who was anxious to serve. I accepted the invitation expecting to stay a year on the American continent. Instead, I remained there, first at McGill and then, for four years, at Harvard, until 1920.

There is, I think, a sense in which my years on the American continent were the most fundamental experience of my life. I learned there that it was my vocation to be a teacher, that, in whatever other fields I might wander, this was the activity, above all, to which I should devote my energies. I learned, secondly, that to teach political science, it was not enough to read books; one had to learn politics from actual experience of their working, and to seek to make of one's lectures an intimate marriage of theory and practice. I learned, thirdly, that the university scene in America was vitally related to the social environment. One could speculate freely, but one must not question the basic assumptions of the system. When I was at McGill, I made a speech attacking the "bitter-endism" of Mr. Lloyd George that was immediately followed by urgent demands for my dismissal. When I was at Harvard, the famous Boston police strike occurred. President Lowell immediately offered the services of the university to the city. It seemed to me that one ought to know why the police were striking before one accepted the view that the city was right. Accordingly, I took great pains to discover what had led to the strike, and found that it was the outcome of long-accumulated grievances met

without sympathy or insight. I ventured to say so; and there broke about my head a storm of indignation in which I was described as almost everything from a villain who seduced youth to a Bolshevik who preached revolution. I was solemnly investigated by the Overseers of the university; and though it was decided that I was not to be dismissed, President Lowell explained to me with emphasis that a teacher limited his utility when he spoke on matters of current controversy. I was not, I inferred, to say my say on the living issues of the time if what I said was inconvenient to the rulers of Harvard. Thus though I loved Harvard and found there friendships of inestimable value to me, I was not sorry when, in the next year, the London School of Economics and Political Science invited me to join its faculty. There I have remained since 1920; and there I hope to remain during my life as a teacher.

But it was not only that I learned in America what I believe to be my vocation. I saw there, more nakedly than I had seen in Europe, the significance of the struggle between capital and labor. I learned how little meaning there can be in an abstract political liberty which is subdued to the control of an economic plutocracy. I saw, too, in strikes like those of Ludlow and Lowell, how the vast machinery of the state is used to crush any movement that questions the authority of those who own economic power. I learned from the imprisonment of Debs and the attacks on La Follette how immense are the pressures to conformity, how fragile the claims of tolerance, whenever the security of a social order is threatened. Not least, I began to perceive, in the difference in the average American attitude to the February and October revolutions in Russia, how profound is the influence of the property relation in shaping opinion. I came back from America convinced that liberty has no meaning save in the context of equality, and I had begun to understand that equality also has no meaning unless the instruments of production are socially owned. But I was still academic enough in experience to believe that this could be proved on rational grounds, and that its proof would be sufficient to win acceptance for it as a principle of social organization. I had associated in America mostly with progressive or academic people who were accustomed to give argument its due weight; and even when, like Mr. Justice Holmes, they were fundamentally conservative in outlook, they were prepared to change their views in the light of discussion. Up to 1920, I think, as I look back, that my socialism was above all the outcome of a sense of the injustice of things as they were. It had not become an insight into the processes of history.

That, I believe, is the main burden of my experience in the eighteen years since I returned to England. They have been full years. From the outset I have been an active member of the Labor Party. I have served on government committees. I have "devised" for

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ministers during the two periods when a Labor government was in power. I have done a good deal of industrial arbitration. I have helped the trade unions in every important strike, especially the general strike of 1926. Teaching and the writing of books apart, most of my leisure has gone into work for socialism. I learned a great deal from five years as an alderman of a London borough. I have seen, too, a good deal of political journalism from within, not least in those four last brilliant years in which H. W. Massingham edited the *London Nation*. I have been closely concerned with the adult-education movement. Invitations to lecture abroad have given me first-hand acquaintance with the politics and the universities of France and Spain, pre-Hitler Germany, and the Soviet Union; and I have returned constantly to America.

Out of it all, the great lesson I have learned is the broad truth of the Marxian philosophy. What I have seen at first hand, no less than what I have read, has left me no alternative. I came back to England in 1920 hopeful that I was going to watch the slow permeation of economic relationships by the democratic principle. I have been driven to the conclusion that no class voluntarily abdicates from the possession of power. I have come to learn that the private ownership of the means of production makes it impossible for the democratic idea to transcend the barriers of class without the capture of the state power by the working class. The experience of Russia, the advent of fascism in Central and Southeastern Europe, the attitude of the owning class in Spain and France and the United States to all serious attempts at social reform, the general strike of 1926 and the betrayal of 1931 in England, the new imperialisms of Japan and Italy, have all convinced me that, in large outline, there is no answer to the philosophy of Marx. Men, broadly, think in terms of an experience made and unmade by their class position. Their conceptions of right action are born of the inferences they draw from the experience of that class position. Individuals may transcend it. But taken generally, all our institutions and their working are conditioned by the property relations of any given society. The dominant ideas and principles of that society will be set by the way in which, in any moment, its property relations are working. If they are working well, there will be a period of concession to the multitude, which can live only by the sale of its labor power. If they are working badly, the policy of concession will halt. A system which lives by profit must make profit. If its power to do so is challenged, the owners of the system will seek to destroy the men and the movements which challenge that power.

This is the reason for the decline of liberalism in the post-war epoch. Ours is that age, the coming of which was foreseen by Marx, in which the relations of production are in contradiction with the

essential forces of production. Our time is comparable to that of the Reformation, when a similar contradiction appeared. Then as now a new property relation was essential, and then as now those who lived by the privileges inherent in the old were ready to fight for them rather than find the terms of a new accommodation. For when such a contradiction reaches its maturity, the price of continuing concession means the erosion of the privileges associated with private ownership. It means a scale of taxation fatal to the making of profit in international competition. It compels that examination of social foundations which, because it disturbs traditional routines, destroys men's ability to be tolerant in matters of social constitution. For those who have been taught by long use to regard privilege as right are rarely able to adjust themselves to the admission that their right may be built upon what other men have come to experience as wrong.

It is, as I think, in this background that all the central problems of our time have to be set. That it makes the future of capitalist democracy dubious is clear. That the inference from it, in the international sphere, is the necessary relation between capitalism and war is clear also. For, given the present distribution of economic power, the owning class is driven into the search for markets abroad in order to win profit. Thence comes the need for armament. Thence comes also the politics of imperialism, concession-hunting, spheres of influence—that whole gamut of power politics to which the world since 1919 has so grimly accustomed us. The failure of the League of Nations is built upon the fact that it demands from its members the surrender of the policy to which the whole inherent logic of their economic system impels them. We have either to find the way to a resumption of the economic expansion of the Victorian Age or enter upon—as we have already entered—a period of war and revolution. But we cannot resume that expansion unless we adjust the relations of production in our society to the potential forces of production. Unless we do so, we are bound to have poverty in the midst of potential plenty, restrictionism, that economic nationalism which, all over the world, is lowering the standard of life. Since the state power is directed by men who live by the vested interests represented by these policies, it is at least difficult, and probably impossible, to transcend them within the limits of existing class relations.

I know no other way of explaining adequately the position in which our generation finds itself. The conclusion I draw from it is the necessity of a unified working class party able either to win political power or, if it meets the challenge of fascism, to emerge victorious from the conflict. The lesson of Germany and Italy is the clear one that division of the working class means its defeat. The lesson of France and Spain is the equally clear one that the attainment of unity

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at the least enables the working class to give a good account of itself when the challenge comes. And the evidence makes it plain that capitalism in its phase of contraction will respect no principle, however venerable, in its effort to retain the power of the state in its hands. That has been the experience of M. Blum in France; it has been, also, the experience of Mr. Roosevelt in the United States. Each had a great popular majority behind him. Each found that the power of his majority was largely nullified by the refusal of the propertied class to cooperate with his purposes. At the historical stage we have reached, the will of the people is unable to use the institutions of capitalist democracy for democratic purposes. For at this stage democracy needs to transform class relations in order to affirm itself; and it will not be allowed to do so if the owning class is able to prevent that achievement.

This attitude seems to me the explicit result of post-war experience, and it is, as I have said, the vindication of the analysis that Marx made of social phenomena nearly a century ago. Certain modes of behavior that I profoundly respect are, I think, ruled out of court by the inferences it involves. It is incompatible with the pacifist doctrine of non-resistance. Had that way been chosen by the Spanish government, it would now be under the heel of a fascist conqueror as brutal in his methods as Hitler. It rules out, also, the Fabian method of gradualism. That principle was the natural method to recommend in an age of capitalist expansion. In the period of capitalism's decline, its result would, I think, be to give to the owning class a supreme opportunity to organize itself for counter-attack. The real lesson of post-war Germany is the futility of trying to reorganize the economic foundations of capitalism by half-measures. That, again, is the inference I would draw from the experience of the two Labor governments in Great Britain. Each was more anxious to prove its orthodox respectability to its opponents than it was to get on with the work of socialism, to which it was committed by public profession. The result was to discourage its friends and to persuade its enemies that the price of social reform was greater than capitalism could afford. The time has come for a central attack on the structure of capitalism. Nothing less than wholesale socialization can remedy the position. The alternative in all Western civilization outside the Soviet Union is, I believe, a rapid drift to fascism, in which the working class will be at a definite disadvantage by reason of the division of its forces. That division has already cost it Italy and Germany. It may one day cost it England and the United States as well. In that event, we shall see a new iron age descend upon mankind in which the very memory of civilized living may well become no more than a traditional legend.

## BETTER SMALLER BUT BETTER

BY HISTORICUS

The editors of MR should be congratulated on their admirable paper on "Cooperation on the Left." It is a message of hope to those members and sympathizers of the Left who, lonely in their bewilderment, desperate in their anxiety, stifled by their doubts and uncertainties, long for nothing more than cooperation, unification, solidarity.

And yet there is something illusionary about this eloquent appeal. Needless to say, there can be no disagreement about the desirability, even urgency, of cooperation among all progressive elements of American society. Needless to stress, that never before have the potential role and responsibilities of the Left been so great as they are today. It is equally obvious, however, that the chances that the Left will be able to rise to its tasks and opportunities are unfortunately worse than poor.

In what follows, an attempt is made to sketch briefly the reasons for this rather bleak conclusion.

For a number of historical reasons, some of which are well known while others are in need of further elucidation, American capitalism is uniquely stable at the present time. This stability is impressive in the economic field; it is even more spectacular in the realm of ideology. What in a different ideological climate would constitute a crisis can be taken with comparative equanimity in the American setting. For example: 3 million unemployed in Italy force De Gasperi's Catholic government to rely on the police as its main pillar of support; 13 percent unemployed in Western Germany rocks the foundations of the Bonn regime; a comparable volume and percentage of unemployment in the US hardly enters into political calculations at the present time. In other words, economic stability has to be considered with due allowance for the "margin of political tolerance." This margin is wider in the US than in any other part of the capitalist world.

It is not that the inherent nature of the capitalist economy has changed. In spite of many stabilizing factors (a large federal budget being the most important) the economy is on the whole as "de-

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*Historicus* is the author of the article "Not Propaganda or Plotting But History" which appeared in MR, Vol. I, No. 5 (Sept. 1949).

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pression-prone" as it ever was. Bust is just as likely to follow boom as in any other period of capitalist history. What is new about the current phase of American capitalism, however, is what may be called the "manipulative ability" acquired by the ruling classes and their government—a manipulative ability that has greatly increased in the last couple of decades, that has received valuable laboratory testing during the war, and that in itself is one of the most important aspects of the increasing monopolization of the socio-economic structure of our society. Big Business relies less and less on the proverbial "invisible hand"—the hand belongs with ever increasing obviousness to its own representatives in the federal government. (A cynical illustration was provided in the March 20th issue of *Life*. In an article devoted to describing and praising Mr. Acheson's "total diplomacy," the reader was informed that the Secretary of State, before announcing this new policy of the American "people," had discussed it thoroughly with ten "business leaders" whose names are listed in the story.)

Big business and its strategists have learned much more thoroughly than is frequently believed (and frequently suggested by old-fashioned holdover ideologists from the liberal age) the lessons of the Great Depression, the devices elaborated by Keynes and his school, and the implications of the war experience. They know perfectly well that employment can be "made," that its level can be pre-determined within fairly narrow limits, and that keeping it somewhere not too far from full employment—the meaning of "not too far" depending on the width of the margin of tolerance mentioned above—is the only course compatible with political security and good profits. The issue of financing the government's "full-employment" policies is by now largely a red herring. Nowadays, neither budget deficits nor the resulting increases in the public debt frighten any one who matters. What does remain a major, indeed a crucial, issue is to find suitable ways of spending the amounts of money that may be required to maintain, say, the present "comfortable" level of under-employment. All outlets that would be rational in the sense that they would contribute to the increase of human welfare, are more or less incompatible with the vested interests of the ruling classes. Payment of doles tends to raise the wage level; government investment in steel, chemicals, public utilities, etc., tends to destroy carefully erected monopolistic fortresses. And so it goes. If the problem were to spend one or two billion a year, a solution could be found at the expense of less powerful interests. But with anything from \$15 to \$25 billion to be pressed into the income stream, the difficulties are well-nigh insuperable.

Or rather they would be if it weren't for the cold war.

The cold war seems to solve this problem in a most admirable way.

No interests that matter are violated as long as the money is spent on armaments and foreign operations. The short-run effect on employment and profits is the same as if the expenditures were of a "rational" type, and the long-run effect is even better since no new productive equipment is created to compete with existing facilities.

This "economic" solution must be supported by a suitable political structure. This political structure is the systematically incited psychosis of the cold war.

The cold war is thus by no means irrational from the point of view of the American ruling classes. Everything synthesizes beautifully in its general effects. It provides the political climate in which an agreement can be extracted from the American people to spend \$20 billion annually for military purposes. It sets the stage for the complete destruction of an independent labor movement: at the present time the CIO and the AFL are vying for the distinction of being accepted as the most faithful servant of American capitalism. It has reshuffled domestic political forces in such a way that openly fascist organizations and individuals, only a few years ago hiding in the underworld of American politics, are able to operate in the center of the political stage—witness the current McCarthy affair. And, last but not least, it provides the grand strategy for expanding and protecting American investments abroad, investments that are very close to the hearts of the biggest American business interests. In one word: it furnishes the political formula for a concerted struggle for the preservation of capitalism abroad and for its strengthening and, if necessary, fascization at home.

The stability and durability of this arrangement appear to depend on three factors: (1) How long can the cold war be maintained in view of the increasingly obvious disappearance of specific objects of contest? No reasonable person in the American government believes seriously that China or Poland, Rumania or Bulgaria, Hungary or Czechoslovakia, can be brought back into the capitalist fold. (2) How long can playing with guns be continued without their commencing to "fire by themselves?" In other words, are there forces within the military establishment that press toward a conflict as the establishment grows larger and politically more important? (3) How long will the country be willing to accept the proposition that the interests of American capitalism briefly outlined above are identical with the interests of the American people?

Unfortunately, it would seem that in view of the "manipulative ability" of the American ruling classes, and in view of the all-persuasive machinery of public opinion formation, the cold war can be prolonged for many years to come. Likewise—but more fortunately—it seems likely that its transformation into a shooting war can be

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avoided for a long time. The third question thus takes on crucial importance. It is the problem of the "subjective factor" in the total situation.

There is no doubt that the present weakness of the subjective factor is adequately characterized in the article of the editors. To a certain extent, this weakness is the result of relatively prosperous economic conditions. They are not as good as they could be, given a rational husbandry of American resources, but they are very good in comparison with the thirties. Nevertheless, economic conditions are not the decisive factor. The boom of the last decade—all the hosannas of the press and politicians to the contrary notwithstanding—has affected the broad masses of the American people much less than one is commonly led to believe. For example, in 1948, the year of record-breaking prosperity, about one-third of all households in the US had incomes of less than \$2000. While real wages of well organized groups of workers have held their own or even increased, there is ample evidence that the real wages of poorly organized workers, of white-collar employees, and of racial minority groups have declined since the war and are in absolute terms on a miserable level. With taxes at their present oppressive level, with sky-rocketing monopoly prices in some fields, with strong government-supported measures against organized labor, etc., etc., there ought at least to be incentive for the development of a powerful subjective factor of the British Labor Party type. We should not forget that most of the talk about the "welfare state" is—at least so far—nothing but eyewash. Social security benefits are little better than poor relief; health insurance is still far away; and industrial pensions affect only workers in the leading, most strongly organized industries.

The real rub, in other words, is not in economic conditions. The weakness of the subjective factor in America, the impotence of the American Left, cannot be understood without a full appreciation of the *ideological* stability of American capitalism. We have to understand the ideologically overpowering impact of bourgeois, fetishistic consciousness on the broad masses of the working population. The still-vigorous belief in the possibilities of individual advancement within the framework of capitalist society. The deep-seated acceptance of bourgeois values, especially the desirability of reaching the status of the next-higher group. The supremely streamlined, multi-pronged manipulation of the public mind. The heart-breaking emptiness and cynicism of the commercial, competitive, capitalist culture. The systematic cultivation of devastatingly neurotic reactions to most social phenomena (through the movies, the "funnies," etc.). The effective destruction in schools, churches, press, everywhere, of everything that smacks of *solidarity* in the conscious-

ness of the man in the street. And finally, the utterly paralyzing feeling of solitude which must overcome any one who does not want to conform, the feeling that there is no movement, no camp, no group to which one can turn. . . .

Is this going to last forever? Social psychology and political experience alike suggest that the prospects are bleak. Quite possibly major changes will come only as the result of shocks; in the humdrum of slow evolution the *status quo* reproduces itself continuously with only such changes as the manipulative machine wishes to induce. The outcome may be fascism, but there seems to be hardly a chance of anything progressive growing in such soil. The ruling class knows this. It is aware of the fact that it does not face any serious dangers in the absence of shocks. It knows that the result of shocks is unpredictable. It will do everything within its power to avoid them—unless the military machine runs away with the bomb! This may be the strongest factor making for peace rather than the "fundamentally peaceful and democratic inclinations of the average American" . . . .

Where does the Left and its cooperation come in? Not very much, not very broadly, not very obviously. The main avenue of activity is to attack on the ideological front—by clarifying the issues, by trying to cut through the cultural fog of capitalist society, by trying to break the notion of the "identity of interests" of the ruling classes with those of the working masses. This is not a program of mass politics, nor should it be the program of a sect. It is a blueprint of intellectual activity, of enlightened economic, ideological, political thinking and discussion that should be free of dogmatic fetters and petty political considerations. It is a program of building cadres, of what Marx used to call *Selbstverständigung*.

There is hardly any room for political cooperation on the Left at the present time because there are no politics of the Left. The time will perhaps come, possibly sooner than we think. But just now the issues are ideological, and ideological problems cannot be solved by organizational makeshifts. To the extent that so-called liberals are themselves fully and unreservedly subject to the prevailing obfuscation, to the extent that they serve as faithful soldiers of the cold-war army, to the extent that they debase themselves to the function of informers and stool-pigeons, to that extent "cooperation" with them can only be of the same nature as "cooperation" between the murderer and his victim. Nor is such cooperation desirable. What is needed—let us say it again and again—is clarity, courage, patience, faith in the spontaneity of rational and socialist tendencies in society. At the present historical moment in our country—"better smaller but better."

## **TASKS OF THE LEFT IN THE USA**

**BY SCOTT NEARING**

"Left," "Center," and "Right" are terms which have a particular application to the US. They also have a general connotation for the western world.

Their general connotation relates to the passing of capitalism as the dominant culture pattern of the West. Their particular application to the United States relates to the struggle to preserve capitalism as the accepted social pattern of this country and of the other non-socialist areas of the world.

On the Right are the Friends of Capitalism. On the extreme Right are those who would restore capitalism to its early competitive phase. They are the true reactionaries in present-day America.

At the Center are the liberals, who uphold the aspects of capitalism which finance their comforts and conveniences but oppose other aspects of capitalism which threaten their ideals or their status. In a pinch the liberals can always be counted on to back up the principles of the established order—private property in the implements of production, special privileges, and the more moderate and lucrative phases of imperialism.

The Left in the US is occupied by a scattering, heterogeneous mixture of individuals and minor social groups which reject capitalism both in principle and in practice. Among these Left elements are state communists, state socialists, syndicalists, anarchists, mugwumps, anti-authoritarians, decentralists, religious idealists, religious pacifists, religious authoritarians. Most of these groups cannot and will not work in harness. Under extreme pressure—such for example, as that generated in France by the Nazi invasion of 1940—they will join a common resistance movement. But once the pressure is removed, each will return to its own narrow circle of activity and influences.

If this is a true picture of the Left in the US today, then the Left cannot be expected to work together. That, indeed, is the experience and the lesson of the past two generations. The American Left is too diverse and diffuse to make common action easy or likely.

What remains? (1) For the individual who is on the Left to stay there, getting neither tired, lonely, nor discouraged. (2) To strengthen existing Left groups and, where necessary, to organize new ones. (3) To make insistent and repeated attempts to merge or federate Left groups. (4) Never to lose sight of the fact that capitalism today is the major institutional obstacle in the path of humanity. (5) To think, plan, act, and organize in these terms.

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*Scott Nearing is the well-known economist, writer, and lecturer.*

## NEEDED: A STRATEGY FOR TRANSITION

BY A GRADUATE STUDENT IN ECONOMICS

In his series of articles on the Progressive Party convention (April MR), I. F. Stone asks the question, "Can capitalism be progressive?" "Yes," he answers, "but only by progressing towards socialism." Here is the crux of the problem of "Cooperation on the Left": finding a path of action that can be trod with enthusiasm by *both* those who believe in socialism and those who want to "make capitalism progressive." In present day America it is these groups which constitute "the Left." Leaders of both groups recognize that progress on this joint road will require important changes in social structure and power relationships.

The initial "cooperation" article (March MR) assumed that foreign policy and civil liberties are the fields in which cooperation is most likely to develop. However, in both these fields the Left is at a grave disadvantage because of the fact that the Soviet Union is a *competitor for world power*, as well as the chief embodiment of socialism. In both these areas emotional thinking is inevitable, the general public has the least first-hand knowledge of facts, and it is easiest for reaction to keep us on the defensive.

Consequently, for the next few years, I see most hope for cooperation on domestic social and economic issues—full employment, anti-monopoly legislation, housing, farm problems, wage-price relationships, labor legislation, monopoly control of press and radio, etc. In the first place, there are good indications that since Russia acquired the atom bomb, American military strategists have dropped any *serious* thought of a preventive war for the present. Secondly, these issues are closer than either foreign policy or civil liberties to the average American family—these are the issues which come up and slap them in the face (or in the pocket-book!) every day. In the third place, these are the main areas in which cooperation can be most wholehearted. Finally, these are the areas which are *crucial* in the struggle for socialism. The power of reaction is basically *economic* power, and anything which weakens its economic power (or even prevents it from becoming stronger) is a step towards socialism.

It seems highly probable that in the United States, as in Britain,

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Scandinavia, and other countries with strong middle-class, democratic, rationalist-Protestant traditions, the transition to socialism will come *gradually*, just as did their transition from feudalism to capitalism. It will consist of a step-by-step whittling away of business power and a simultaneous building up of the power of labor and the Left. This transition is in process today; many aspects of the future socialist society are even now developing within the body of American capitalism.

*The greatest need of the American Left today is a clear and detailed theory and strategy for this transition to socialism—based solidly on a systematic, scientific analysis of American conditions today.* A serious gap has developed in Left thinking between a *critical* analysis of the faults and follies of the present system (often dangerously underestimating its strength and adaptability), and somewhat utopian pictures of the socialist society we want.

The American tradition of pragmatic approach—of respect for *facts* (once they have been clearly established) and for *reason*—is a tremendous asset to the American Left in working out our own strategy. Today we also have a wealth of factual “raw materials” previously unavailable here or in other countries—an increasingly adequate volume of economic and social statistics, highly developed public opinion polling technics, scientific knowledge of “public opinion management,” plenty of business trade journals for “intelligence reports” from the opposition camp, an increasing body of academic social research studies. We also have an increasingly large group of “intellectual staff material” to draw upon: union research staffs, progressive-minded government experts, professors, and college students.

Here are *some* of the questions that need answering in order to build a sound strategy of transition:

1) Which current economic and social trends constitute real progress on the high road to socialism (and there *are* many)? Which are neutral side-tracks? Which are merely delaying road-blocks? And which are dangerous steps towards fascism? (Putting *too little* stress on the first kind, and *too much* on the last kind can lead to discouragement and apathy.)

For example, the forecast-and-recommendation type of “economic planning” by the President’s Council of Economic Advisers: is this significant progress towards *socialist* economic planning, insofar as it lays the administrative and statistical ground-work and makes the public more “planning conscious,” or will its failure to prevent depression disillusion the public with *all* economic planning?

Would the “Economic Advisory Council” provided for in Senator Murray’s “Economic Expansion Bill” of last year contribute towards public acceptance of real economic planning, or towards fascist cor-

porative tendencies? (This bill, incidentally, which has received very little attention from progressives, is still "in the works" in Congress and will presumably be brought out again as soon as unemployment is once more recognized as politically dangerous).

What is the relevance for socialism of anti-trust legislation, and "aid to small business"—loans, research, technical and market services, patent reform, product ratings and consumer information services, etc.?

2) How adaptable is American capitalism? What is the significance for the transition to socialism of modern business research—in personnel management, economics, market relations, and technology? To what extent *has* American business recognized the fact that prosperity and profits depend on consumer purchasing power? To what extent *has it*, in fact, accepted the idea of government deficit spending as an anti-depression measure?

3) What about "class struggle?" The large "industrial middle class"—the technical, professional, and clerical "intelligentsia"—characteristic of modern industrial nations (including, now, the Soviet Union), was unknown 100 years ago. So was the comparatively high educational level and standard of living of *large sections* of the American working class today. The sharp cleavage between the squalid shacks in the valley and the mansion on the hill, which once was the chief *focus* of the struggle for socialism, has given way to the problem of depression and unemployment. Should "class struggle" still be the chief *motif* in the struggle for socialism? Or would a scientific analysis of motivation and attitude formation under present conditions call for a new formulation?

4) Most liberal congressmen come from *urban* areas where labor is strong. Most reactionary congressmen come from *rural* areas. How can these rural areas be liberalized? Would decentralization of industry (for atomic defense) be an asset to socialism, or would it "diffuse a vested interest in the private enterprise system," as industry seems to believe? Could scientific analysis answer this question?

5) Where do farmers fit into a socialist strategy? What sort of a solution to the present farm problem would contribute most towards the victory of socialism, and at the same time be politically feasible *now*?

6) Which current trends in labor relations are helping to pave the way towards socialism, and which are not? How about labor-management production councils?

7) What about reactionary control of press and radio? Maybe we've spent too much time "exposing" it, and not enough time finding ways to counteract it! Why don't American *unions* have a decent daily paper—even in metropolitan areas? Have we really tried to

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find a practicable legislative device to prevent *control* by advertisers?

8) To what extent is American foreign policy "dictated" by monopoly capital? Many business groups opposed the Marshall Plan, while many liberal, religious and labor groups supported it! At almost every stage in the history of American foreign policy there have been sharply conflicting attitudes within the business community itself—between Morgan and Rockefeller, between export and import industries, etc. Are we doing all we can to utilize the self-interest of those industries which need a market in eastern Europe and China?

9) How could *socialists* exploit conflicting interests *within the business community*—between the Committee for Economic Development and the National Association of Manufacturers, between big and small, between export and import, between consumer goods and capital goods, between small-town and Wall Street, between productive *management* and banker *control*—just as *reaction* exploits divisions on the Left? Is "divide and conquer" a one-way proposition?

We need answers to these questions—answers based not on more discussion and guesswork, but on painstaking, detailed research—the kind of scientific research into attitudes, motivation, balance of social forces, etc., for which we have only recently developed really adequate tools.

But the job is entirely too big for any one man today. Furthermore, if it is to contribute its full potential as a basis for "Cooperation on the Left" it should not be done by any single political group.

What is needed is an independent, "non-political" research organization, composed of specialists in all the fields of knowledge which have to do with social change—economics, political science, sociology, history, psychology, anthropology, education, public opinion management, planning, law, etc. Their primary qualifications should be technical knowledge, ability, and honest dedication to the scientific method. It should not be formally linked to any single political group—even to a united labor party if and when one is formed—but should include a wide variety of Left political opinion—from Communists to ADA liberals, from those who advocate complete socialism as soon as possible and a one-party political system, to those who merely want to "counteract depressions and increase economic democracy, but hope socialism won't be necessary."

There are hundreds of people who have these qualifications and would be eager to help if such a research group could be organized. Thousands of progressive-minded graduate students at American universities who now waste their time on uninspired academic "research projects" would prefer to do really important work—projects which would fulfill academic requirements but at the same time would contribute to an overall program of working out a systematic strategy

of socialist progress under the coordination of such a research group. In addition, there are hundreds of labor leaders who have invaluable facts and suggestions to contribute to such a project.

To get such a group started, the chief requisites now are a few people with the vision and time to organize it, and enough money to hire a small clerical staff to handle correspondence and the routine aspects of research.

Facts are facts, and the common use of the same scientific, factual, research material by various groups on the Left would be a strong basis for real cooperation.

## UNITY WITH COMMUNISTS IMPOSSIBLE UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS

BY ALLEN H. BARTON, Rosedale, N. Y.

Of your articles on "Cooperation on the Left," the most revealing of the Left's difficulties is that of Cedric Belfrage.

Mr. Belfrage, like almost all leftists, believes that "there is such a thing as a science of the development of human society." But Mr. Belfrage believes that this is an exact science, here and now. It is only that uninformed goof, Mr. X, who "sees all human beings, groups, and governments as capable of being right sometimes and wrong sometimes," who doesn't understand why "some loyal Americans believe they should defend the Soviet Union in *all* [my italics] of its actions."

It is too easy to parody Mr. Belfrage's views. It may not be fair to say that the "greater mutual understanding" he wants consists of my understanding that he is infallible in matters of social science and ethics, and his understanding that there are "many psychological reasons other than stupidity" for my failure to share his Marxist infallibility.

Just how exact is your Marxist social science, Mr. Belfrage? It is just that question and its political implications which are at the heart of the Left's internal troubles. Is there an important pos-

## UNITY WITH COMMUNISTS IMPOSSIBLE

sibility of error on the part of Marxist political leadership? If there is not, then we have nothing to fear from the Soviet leaders or our own Communists; there is nothing frightening in a one-party system where expression and criticism are completely regulated by the party state.

But if Marxism is not a very exact social science. . . . If the Communist leadership and any leadership are inevitably fallible in matters of social science and ethics. . . . And if *then* we face the world-wide expansion of the absolute party state of the Communists, with its complete control over expression, criticism, political action, its confidence that it has a monopoly on virtue and is right about everything. . . .

*That* is the nightmare against which non-Communist leftists react—explosively, often irrationally, but basically I think correctly. If social science and social ethics are still in a very imperfect stage of development, if leadership is liable to serious errors, then only the strictest protection of free expression for unpopular opinions and of the right to organize to change leadership can save us from the nightmare of a society going wronger and wronger and wronger with no way to stop it.

This is the basic reason, I believe, for disunity on the Left; this is why it seems impossible for any relations to exist between East and West other than those based on force. The very existence of *Monthly Review* is a contradiction—an attempt by free discussion and criticism to develop unity between those who do and those who do not believe in free discussion and criticism. (I am sure that both Communists and anti-Communists have told the Editors that their position must logically lead to anti-Communism and resistance to Soviet expansion, to the Marshall Plan, perhaps even to the Atlantic Pact!)

I don't expect the American Communists to be noticeably reformed by any amount of intelligent discussion in MR. The social structure of the Soviet Union makes it quite impossible for its leaders to tolerate the development of a different, "liberal" form of Communism anywhere, and renders the present impasse, international and within the Left, inevitable. But certainly the attempt of MR and its contributors to work out the problems of the Left are valuable and stimulating to everyone else in the Left. Maybe the non-Communist Left can work up enough unity to get along without the CP—and in so doing, bring about the conditions for an ultimate change in the Soviet attitude toward heretical leftism. But as long as the Communists give the impression of tolerating heretics only so long as they lack the power to burn them, unity with them is quite impossible.

## NEEDED: NEW METHODS FOR REACHING PEOPLE

BY HAROLD A. COWELL

First of all: the American people want too many things, and as long as the liberal elements go along with them and express themselves as also wanting too many things, collectively as well as individually, all are headed in the direction of disillusionment, disappointment, and the accompanying disaster and despair. We serve reaction and not the people when we go about promoting wider discussion of many issues simultaneously. This divides the people, in no way does it unite them. The crying need of the times is unity, and any educational effort which divides them is not in the people's interest. The National Association of Manufacturers recognizes this —why do we refuse to do so?

Our wide discussions are too complex; they read or sound like the printed matter in an insurance policy, and are just about as understandable and therefore ineffective as far as the people we hope to influence are concerned. These discussions mean nothing in the long run, even with the small percentage of outstanding people we are able to convince. *Above all things*, we must learn that the American people are not interested in facts just because they are facts. They are interested only in those facts which they are able to repeat in their own words, in this way impressing their friends and associates with their somewhat superior knowledge. From this, it follows logically that there is little point in efforts to convince anyone of any fact, unless this is something which is presented in such a manner that he, or she, can and will go about telling their friends and associates about it. What people learn, but do nothing about, might better remain unlearned.

As I wish this comment to be constructive, I will say that in "Cooperation on the Left," there is no emphasis on any first step recommended, which any of your readers will discuss with their friends and associates. If this statement is interpreted as true in degree only, it seems quite plain to me that whatever is recommended is presented less effectively than is amply justified by the circumstances.

As long as we continue to depend upon present methods of

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*Harold A. Cowell is a worker in an auto plant.*

## NEEDED: NEW METHOD OF REACHING PEOPLE

gaining needed reforms, I think we must be satisfied with the utterly inadequate remedies reaction sees fit to apply. New methods of reaching the people so they can make up their minds are necessary. My own suggestion is that any established publication like *Monthly Review* can become a powerful influence for good if one particular issue is selected and there is promotion of the formation of groups, in each community where there are subscribers, devoted to extending the understanding by wide sections of the people of that one particular issue. Along with this, there must be ways of coordinating the work of these groups. My choice of an issue is "the widespread and deliberate misrepresentation, misinterpretation, distortion, and suppression of significant news items and opinions by the press, radio, pulpit, and other means of education, which taken together, constitute an 'iron curtain,' through which the information, prerequisite of intelligent decisions, is kept from the people." Another more effective issue could be substituted, but this one is my selection.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING PART IN COMMUNITY LIFE

BY FREDERICK BOYDEN, New York City

My political experience hardly qualifies me to give extended comment on your excellent article, "Cooperation on the Left." Such experience has been limited to student activities and working for the Progressive Party in a small town. I am not sure that anything I may have to say has not already been said, which indicates that the Left, among other things, should find new and better ways to make their program known to their neighbors, their fellow-workers, and themselves; for if the Left, in the last few years had spoken to the "relatively inchoate masses" in more understandable and effective language, it might not be so isolated now.

Many members of the Left known to me have failed, in their daily life, to circulate among those who do not share their views. It is not enough to convince people who are already convinced. Just as members of the Left judge others according to their stand on issues in which the Left is interested, so do others judge the Left on where its members stand in regard to issues which, I'm afraid, too often seem trivial to the Left. Participation in the little things of commu-

nity life, a concern with the problems of individuals not on "your side," might help those individuals and, incidentally, the Left to a better understanding of what moves men to act. What I have said is commonplace; everyone agrees; but the kind of participation to which I have referred does not occur—particularly in the large urban areas, where leftists can always find other leftists to argue with.

Everyone is familiar with the arguments against red-baiting. When they have not succeeded—and they generally don't succeed against "educated" liberals, whose program is in many respects similar to that of the Communists—it should become apparent that action and discussion along other lines must be attempted. If a man has one view of you and you force him to regard with approval your conduct along lines not necessarily connected with the subject causing him to take the initial view, the latter must change. It seems, then, desirable to give those with whom we wish to cooperate many perspectives, all coloring each other, from which to contemplate the possibility of cooperation. I think that red-baiting, above anything else on the political scene, must be exposed, articulately, continuously and courageously; but when the exposure, on its own level, has not succeeded, another way must be found.

As to your remarks on humility, self-criticism, outspokenness on the matter of socialism, I wholly agree. It is hard for honest men to be frightened of others who are honest; making one's own position perfectly plain makes fearful anticipation on the part of one's co-worker impossible: he already knows the "worst."

## COOPERATION ON THE INTELLECTUAL LEFT

BY PHILIP A. KLEIN

The two great strongholds of the Left have always been the working class and the intellectuals. Much has been written in recent months about the defections and disintegration of the trade unions, which are the organized expression of political and social awareness on the part of workers. Considerably less has been written about what

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## COOPERATION ON THE INTELLECTUAL LEFT

seems to be the equally dangerous disintegration of the intellectual Left, which has its chief center of operations in American universities and colleges.

Although the discussion which the editors of MR began should, quite properly, confine itself to problems of theory and strategy rather than problems of "an essentially temporary or transitory character," it seems to me that it is in some of the latter problems that the weaknesses of the Left can be most clearly seen. I am a graduate student at the University of California. As an undergraduate, I attended the University of Texas. I have therefore been able to watch the intellectual Left in action during two of its most important battles in the past five or six years.

The similarities between the fight for academic freedom at the University of Texas (which culminated in the dismissal of President Homer P. Rainey) and the fight for academic freedom at the University of California (which culminated recently in what amounted, in actuality, to a capitulation to the Regents' demands) are not difficult to find. The details of the two fights are not important here. Suffice it to say that in both cases the intellectual Left was fighting the representatives of monopoly capital in the persons of their respective boards of regents. If these two universities can be assumed to be typical of American universities generally, then certain basic weaknesses of the intellectual Left become apparent.

In both cases unity was held to be more precious than all else. The assault against the demands of monopoly capitalists was to be watered down to the lowest common denominator. The more militant leftists were willing formally to cloak their objections in terms such that the greatest support among the members of the university community could be obtained for them. That one of these cases ended in what might be termed at least a partial victory and the other in what at present seems to be complete failure can be attributed to the fact that five years of cold war and wholesale witch hunts have caused the lowest common denominator of Left resistance to fall considerably lower—so low now that it almost amounts to no resistance at all. It is this lowest-common-denominator type of thinking which seems to threaten the very existence of the Left today.

This is the reason why the distinction which the editorial makes between unity and cooperation seems to me to be so very important. It is one of the distinctions least appreciated by the intellectual Left today. The fact that there are differences in ultimate goals keeps various elements of the Left from cooperating on those fronts of the overall battle where they could cooperate. Complete agreement is held to be a necessary prerequisite to any cooperation at all. And because the intellectual Left has fallen prey to all the hysteria that

has grown up in this country in recent years, the area in which this unanimity of opinion can be obtained has steadily shrunken until today it threatens to disappear.

The intellectual Left thus finds itself in a somewhat paradoxical situation. It refuses to act unless it can first achieve unity; and when it does achieve this unity, its action has become so emasculated that it is scarcely that of a Left at all. What is more, this situation produces a vicious circle, for anyone familiar with university procedure knows that faculty chances of success are directly proportional to the degree to which the faculty is united. That the quality of this unity has deteriorated in recent years is not difficult to understand in light of what has been going on at Texas and Washington and California. It is even apparent in the pages of *MR*. No one can fail to be struck by the fact that both of the unsigned contributions to the May number came from faculty members. Their chances of keeping their jobs would in all probability be rather slim if they had signed their names.

What is the answer to the predicament in which the intellectual Left finds itself today? Insofar as it is composed of teachers and scholars, a certain amount of unity is essential, if only to ensure that they may continue to carry on the fight from their present positions. But that unity must be reconsidered. It must be a unity to present to the enemy in battle. This does not mean that it must be a unity of complete internal agreement on all possible means to reach all possible desirable ends. It will no doubt be a long difficult job to reach a practical sort of unity, but the sort of unity which *MR* editors suggest seems to me to indicate the kind of essential understanding that is required.

Certainly, when it comes to considering the kind of basic unity which the Left must achieve to be effective, the distinction between the intellectual Left and the Left as a whole must be abandoned. (It is a questionable distinction to begin with, and was introduced here only to enable me to speak about that part of the Left which I am familiar with and which seems to have been most ignored.) Aside from the rules which the editors suggest for immediate co-operation, it would seem that we need to reeducate ourselves toward clarifying the long-range objective which all liberals, Communists, and socialists seek. With such agreement, as the editors point out, disagreements between Communists and non-Communists over tactics, or between socialists and progressive capitalists, etc., would be healthy and stimulating. They would not endanger the very existence of so necessary a political and social entity as the Left. It is toward such a reformulation of the basic philosophy of the Left that discussions such as *MR*'s can make a significant contribution.

## **AN ATTACK ON I. F. STONE'S "PROBLEMS OF THE PROGRESSIVE PARTY"**

**BY C. A. GREEN, Levittown, N. Y.**

I. F. Stone's article, "Problems of the Progressive Party," indicates to me that we are due for even greater confusion on the Left.

Stone says that 95 percent of the delegates to the Progressive Party Convention were socialists (or Communists). Hence there would be no difficulty in changing it into a socialist party. In any case the PP is not a practical vehicle of political action in elections—"it can hardly elect a dogcatcher outside of New York." Therefore, "it has nothing to lose by being honest," the clear implication being that it is not honest now, and would not be honest if anything was to be lost by it. The conclusion is that nobody is going to join it anyway except "old-time Populists, Wobblies, anarchists, Socialists, or Communists who know the score better than their leaders," together with Foster-line Communists of course, and "thinking youngsters more likely to be held and attracted by a vigorous radicalism." Therefore a heavy injection of socialism into the PP is prescribed, and the abandonment of the original idea of rebuilding the old progressive coalition that Roosevelt formed.

Mr. Stone's whole argument is built on the illusion that the word "socialism" would unite every one who considers himself some kind of a socialist. But the PP can unite these people now only because it does not claim to be socialist; the moment it decided to be a socialist party it would split into a hundred factions, each claiming to have the only true definition of what socialism really is and ready to fight to the death for it. The biggest and dominant group would, doubtless, be the CP members for they would not argue among themselves; their position would be fixed by their leaders. The CP would thus continue to dominate the PP as it now does; but there would be even more internal strife, and all but the "tough" factionalists would run away. We would have traded our ineffectual PP for an even more ineffectual "independent socialist party," which would be indistinguishable from the Communists and therefore only a second edition of them not so legibly written out.

The only legitimate reason for the existence of the PP, and the only force it has, is the aim of re-gathering the forces that put zip and power into the democratic mass movement during Roosevelt's time.

The task of delegates to a national convention is not to satisfy themselves but to represent the views common to the masses they wish to unite. True, 95 percent of the delegates to the PP convention probably believed in 57 varieties of socialism; but the masses they want to unite are still 95 percent of a different mind. Should the convention and the party satisfy the thousand delegates, or the millions of men outside whom they want to organize? Even the greenest trade union organizer could give the answer to that question more accurately than Stone has done.

Stone takes a very "superior," if not supercilious, attitude toward Wallace. One may agree that Wallace has not been the strongest leader possible, and at the same time be equally certain that Stone's line is even weaker than Wallace's. Wallace is at least much closer to the realities of life than Stone, who seems to love words better than he does facts.

Socialism is so little of a force in America because in this country it is still under the curse of sectarianism and scholasticism. It looked for a few years as though it might emerge from that protracted childhood—but bang! it plumped right back into its worst aspects. At present American socialism is neither practical nor theoretical—it is only pedantic and dogmatic. And Stone is no better than the rest, only he garnishes it with a touch of romanticism.

There is no short-cut to the building of a real socialist party in America. It certainly can't be done by a repair and reconstruction job on Henry Wallace's party.

Even discussion of the question is a waste of time until those who discuss are ready to take a serious and responsible attitude, facing the real problems and demanding answers fitting to the facts of life rather than to their own little individual prejudices and fancies.

There are 20 million practical and progressive-minded Americans. But they are having one devil of a time to find acceptable leaders and organizations. Socialists who cannot do something about *this* are not worth their salt; certainly they will never bring socialism to this country.

Best wishes to *Monthly Review*, and I hope it does a better job.

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*Society can overlook murder, adultery or swindling; it never forgives the preaching of a new gospel.*

—Frederic Harrison

## AN APPEAL—AND A RECOMMENDATION

BY ROBERT SHILLAKER

We reprint here a statement by the retiring Chairman of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Unitarian Fellowship for Social Justice.

We would much prefer to run this statement as a full-page ad in the *New York Times* and other leading newspapers throughout the country. But, alas, the only space we can afford is in our own columns.

We ask you, our readers, to see that this statement is read by as many people as you can reach—and to follow up by adding their names to MR's list of subscribers.—The Editors.

Fellow Unitarians and Friends:

In taking leave of you as Chairman of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Unitarian Fellowship for Social Justice, I want to present a point of view which was not appropriate for me to express during my term of office.

Ever since the end of the war, or perhaps I should say, ever since the death of Roosevelt, there has been a steady shift away from the America of Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Woodrow Wilson, the La Follettes, and Norris of Nebraska, and towards the direction of a political atmosphere we had never supposed could possibly exist in these United States. This is apparent in our foreign policy where we back every unpopular, corrupt, and feudalistic government in the world. On the domestic scene, it is becoming more apparent every day as the traditional American freedom and the later "New Deal" give way to undisguised reaction, including the "thought-control" system of our late enemies.

Perhaps nothing more aptly illustrates America's changed role in the world than when bombers appear in the sky over Shanghai, children look up and exclaim "Americans!" in the same tone of horror that fifteen years ago the children of Madrid used to shriek, "Germans!"—"Italians!".

There are some who say this is only a temporary phenomenon; that there have been periods of reaction before, but then the pendulum swung the other way; another Wilson or another F.D.R., and the march of progress is resumed. I cannot find comfort in this pleasant thought. Apart from the fact that any fortuitous circum-

stance of another F.D.R. happening along at the right moment is one we can hardly count upon, there are still weightier reasons why a return to genuine democracy under the capitalistic aegis is not a likely contingency. That reason lies in technological progress. Every year that passes sees the need for fewer wage earners to produce a greater output. As far back as 1945, I wrote: "Fear of a depression plays no small part in the psychological preparation for World War III." In recent months it has been admitted by such conservative journals as the *U.S. News and World Report*, *Barron's Financial Weekly*, and the *Wall Street Journal* that we should be in the midst of a depression *now* if it were not for government spending for war preparation! What kind of a social system is it that must depend upon preparation for genocide? The situation is preposterous. Even the claim that we have a higher standard of living (Sweden may not agree) than other countries becomes an empty boast. Better a cave in the loess cliffs of Yenan than a pent house on Park Avenue when the bombs start falling. To a truly religious person, better the simple life of the Christian community of the first century than a luxury civilization that requires preparation for mass murder in order to keep its unemployed off the streets.

It is extremely doubtful that the old social order could be patched up and made decent and honorable again, even by a Henry Wallace; and let us face it, there is no possibility of electing a genuine liberal to the White House at any time in the foreseeable future. When a Tom Clark was placed upon the august tribunal once graced by Holmes and Brandeis, the stamp of finality was placed upon the fact that the Jeffersonian tradition was gone forever. It is high time we gave up the comfortable illusion that some day we shall elect another F.D.R. and again become a liberal capitalistic democracy.

The true feeling of America's ruling class and those allied with it, was expressed by Herbert U. Nelson, \$25,000-a-year lobbyist for the National Association of Real Estate Boards, when, in a letter made public April 19th by the House Lobbying Committee, he wrote: "I do not believe in democracy. I think it stinks. I don't think anybody except direct taxpayers should be allowed to vote. I don't believe women should be allowed to vote at all"—all of which is reminiscent of Mussolini's famous dictum: "Democracy is a putrid corpse."

The crash of October 1929 came as a great surprise to almost everybody. But the guns of World War II had been silent hardly a year before men were asking each other about a coming depression—not, will it come? only, *when* will it come? At long last what every Marxist has known is perceived by all, namely, that depressions are a phase of the capitalist system. The fact that we have so far staved

#### AN APPEAL—AND A RECOMMENDATION

off a crisis through government spending for war in no way invalidates the argument.

Those in power are acutely aware of the fact that never again will veterans who fought "to make the world safe for democracy" patiently sell apples on street corners as in Mr. Hoover's time; they realize better than many liberals realize, that a repetition of 1929 would mean the end of the capitalistic system. All indications point to the fact that American capitalists, faced with the same dilemma as faced their German counterparts in the early 30's, will seek the same way out—fascism and war.

I am not going to dilate upon this horrible prospect; better that you acquaint yourselves with alternatives suggested in the columns of a periodical that is now one year old and is, in my estimation, the best journal of political and social analysis published by the non-Communist "Left" in many a day. I am referring to *Monthly Review*. This is the magazine for which Albert Einstein wrote in the opening issue "Why Socialism?" The editors are Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy. The magazine address is 66 Barrow Street, New York 14, N. Y. This is not a Communist-controlled periodical; it is an independent socialist magazine. Every article since its inception has been on a very high plane of scholarship. Especially timely is the discussion initiated in the April issue and still continuing: "Cooperation on the Left." In Germany squabbles on the Left opened the way for a Hitler; cooperation was only achieved by way of Dachau, Buchenwald, and uncounted millions of dead. Cannot we possibly learn from this lesson?

I realize that a venal press, ceaselessly hammering away on the same theme for three decades has made "socialism" a term of opprobrium to the majority of my fellow-Americans, but I would remind you that there have been Socialist congressmen and Socialist mayors of American cities. We very nearly elected one such in Los Angeles, and this was not due to the Kremlin or "foreign agents," for the Kremlin was in the hands of the Czar in those days. Let us recall too, that millions of Americans were inspired by the prophetic writings of Edward Bellamy long before the Russian Revolution. There is nothing Un-American about the visioning of a new social order.

Unitarians pride themselves that they seek the truth no matter where it leads them. I hope this is true. If it is true for you, I hope you will send for a sample copy of *Monthly Review* (35c). If possible, get the April and May issues.

It is true we seek a new approach to the problems facing us. We have been fighting rearguard actions long enough. We save one Negro from inhuman slavery, but every year scores of Negro-Americans are lynched or sentenced to a horrible chain-gang punishment

for crimes they may or may not have committed; while thousands of lives are shortened or stunted by upbringing in blighted areas.

Let us face the facts: only a socialist America will be an America where men of every ethnic strain will live and work and raise their families in health and human dignity, and with opportunity beckoning every child no matter what his social or racial origin. The time for patching up is past; the system cannot be adequately remedied no matter how many protests are made by well-meaning liberals like ourselves. America needs a new social order founded upon the ethics taught by the Man of Galilee.

This analysis will not make me popular even among some members of our Unitarian Fellowship; many of you are in comfortable circumstances, and the individual who wants you to sweep out your mental closet with the new broom of unorthodox ideas is not esteemed. I must remind you that your "comfortable circumstances" will not be comfortable for very long if, in an effort to save the capitalist system, the rulers of America precipitate or blunder into an atomic war. Aside from that, I do not believe any of us want to be a party, even passively, to the crime of genocide. And there are more children proportionately in Russian cities than in any other cities on earth.

The logical mind will not accept the formulations of a venal press. "Socialism" is *not* a bad word; it is a way of life by which humanity can live and work in peace, develop its latent powers and all the possibilities of the divine nature inherent in man.

There is none of us so mentally barren but what we can do *something* to mold the social order nearer to the heart's desire. I urge you to bring an open mind to the study of the alternative to fascism which I have mentioned, and to do your part in creating a socialist America of Peace and Abundance, and a world in which little children in Shanghai, in Greece, in Viet Nam and Indonesia, and everywhere else on God's green earth, can look up into the sky and not be **AFRAID!**

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*Capitalist wars for capitalist conquest and plunder must be fought by the capitalists themselves so far as I am concerned. . . . I have no country to fight for, my country is the earth and I am a citizen of the world.*

—Eugene V. Debs

(continued from inside front cover)

row crowd who, unwittingly perhaps, make us waste a lot of time, energy, and money which we can't afford. They get a postcard reminder from us that their subscription is about to expire—and they pay no attention. Then they get a warning letter that we are about to remove their stencil from the files—and they pay no attention. So we make the notations on their various cards, remove their stencils, do all the finicky, pernickety little chores connected with taking them off our subscription list—and then, at long last, when the work is done, some of them pay attention and send in their renewals.

We have no quarrel with those—there are some—who don't like MR and decide not to renew. Our quarrel is with those who do like it, those who get mad if they miss an issue, but let their renewals lapse through inattention or laziness.

There's no logic in that kind of behavior. Our system is a simple one. Test it now. This issue of MR is Vol. 2, No. 3; that's in big type on the front cover. Now look at the envelope in which the magazine came. Under your name and address there's a code number giving volume first and issue second, for example, 2-12, or 2-6, or 3-12, and so on. That code number tells you when your sub expires. If it's 2-3, that means the issue you have in your hands is your last; if it's 2-4, that means next month's issue is your last.

Suppose your sub is up three months from now. If you know now that you want to continue with MR, then there's absolutely no sense in not renewing right away. If you do so, then everything is easy; we make your 2-6 a 3-6 (or a 4-6 if you subscribe for two years); we save the trouble and expense of sending you reminder postcards and letters, and you stay out of our doghouse.

This is a 40-page issue. We had to go up an additional 8 pages because we have received so many contributions to the Cooperation On The Left discussion—and there are still a few more to run next month. The extra 8 pages costs us quite a chunk of money, but our hope is that we will get it back in additional subscriptions—you can help us there, too.

We hope to have in an early issue an article on Germany by Basil Davidson, author of "Italy and the Marshall Plan" in last December's MR. Meanwhile, we strongly recommend to your attention his latest book, *Germany: What Now?* (Muller, London, 1950). This book expresses substantially our own position on the German problem and does so very ably. It can be obtained from International Mail Order Service (North American Department), 52 Charing Cross Road, London W.C. 2, England, for \$1.90. A check on an American bank is acceptable.

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—CEDRIC BELFRAGE,  
in the *National Guardian*

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